

Centro de Investigación en Alimentos y Desarrollo



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Honorable FCC Commissioners:

I was very pleasantly surprised when I read RM-11831. It proposes a much needed modification to the FCC rules. The amateur radio spectrum is a worldwide park and treasure similar to our national parks. One of its core purposes has been to encourage the development and learning of individuals interested in wireless, so that they become a national and worldwide resource. Amateur radio is the reason I became an electrical engineer. As an EE professor and amateur, I use it to allow my students to experiment with wireless projects.

The kind of learning we need to foster in the amateur service requires openness, especially in the protocols, and data being sent and received. Without this openness, amateurs who use modes that are closed, are reduced to being “appliance operators,” and are deprived of the opportunity to learn about these protocols.

Commercial exploitation of the amateur radio spectrum by companies such as the German SCS selling modems whose protocols are closed is detrimental to the goal of producing individuals who are experts in the state of the wireless art. I applaud efforts of the Winlink community to move to open source software, but unfortunately the very nature of their communication, prohibits listeners who are not sysops on the Winlink system to “read the mail.” This makes it hard for me to motivate my students to build receivers to listen to users of the Winlink system. All they would receive would be the call signs of the users. It could all be fixed by this proposed ruling. This fix would not preclude amateur radio operators sailing the globe from using the amateur service to send email via amateur radio. In fact in emergency situations, it would only benefit them, as there would be a much wider audience with the capability of listening to their SOS calls. This rule would make their wireless email public, and the protocols that they use open source, so the senders and intended recipients would not be the only beneficiaries of the information propagating through our wireless park. I learned a lot as a teenager “reading the mail” of other amateurs describing over the air how they built their equipment. In those days, “codes and ciphers” were prohibited. This proposed rule would encourage amateurs to create better digital modes that are open for all to learn from.

RM-11831 would preserve the amateur radio spectrum for the use of all in a much more free way, and would benefit our nation significantly.

Sincerely yours,

Rob Frohne, Ph.D., P.E.

Professor